



Distance/Remote and/or Blended Learning Policy

Review Date: September 2022

Reviewed by: SMT

Review Period: 12 months

Staff Responsibility: Academic Deputy Head

Introduction

The aim of this policy is to ensure we can:

1. Offer all students an equal learning experience regardless of their location
2. Ensure teaching does not disadvantage or advantage any group of students or individuals
3. Protect the interests of all students and the integrity of their qualifications.

In the event of a school closure, or where students are required to self-isolate, the school is committed to providing continuity of education to its students and will do so through a process of remote (online) and blended learning.

Remote learning = where a student is attending lessons off site.

Blended learning = where a teacher simultaneously teaches a class with some students on-site and others learning remotely.

To facilitate both remote and blended learning, all students at Windermere School from Year 3 and above have a laptop, as do all academic staff.

Extensive remote learning would apply particularly in a situation in which the school is closed for an extended period of time, but a high proportion of students and teachers are healthy, and able to work as normal from home. This policy does not normally apply in the event of short-term school closures (e.g. as a result of inclement weather) or a short-term student absence.

Remote learning may also be appropriate in situations when students, in agreement with the school, have a period of absence but are able to work at home, at least to some extent. This may apply in cases such as longer-term illness or where students are self-isolating during an infectious disease outbreak, assuming students are well and are able to complete school work at home.

There is no obligation for the school to provide continuity of education to students who absent themselves from school, with or without parental permission, in contravention to school or government guidance. This may apply, for example, if parents choose to take students on holiday during term time. Similarly, this would apply if parents made the decision, without prior agreement with the school, to absent their children from school 'as a precaution', against official guidance, in the event of an outbreak of infectious disease.

Remote learning for individual students

Assuming an absence has been agreed with the school, and the student in question is healthy enough to work from home, the school will provide work for students who are unable to attend in person. If this occurs for an individual student, the distribution of work will be via their class teachers (e.g. using Teams and Show my Homework) and communication with the parent/carer will be coordinated by the student's tutor.

Remote learning in the event of extended school closure

In the event of an extended school closure, the school will provide continuity of education in the following ways:

- Direct live instruction from class teachers will take place on Teams using either the normal timetable or via an amended timetable, with students able to ask questions online (via Teams, Show my Homework and email).
- The setting of work that students complete electronically. This may be hand written work that is photographed and submitted, or via the use of electronic platforms such as Teams and Forms.
- The assessment of specific assignments that are submitted to teachers electronically and on which feedback is provided. Students and teachers are expected to have access to the internet whilst at home but the school recognises that some families may not have home printers and will therefore not require the printing of material.

The primary platforms the school will use to deliver continuity of education are:

- Microsoft Office 365 (e.g. the use of Forms for quizzes and tests).
- Microsoft Teams: accessed via the relevant app or desktop application, or via the following URL: <https://teams.microsoft.com>
- Satchel One (referred to within school as 'Show my Homework')
- ManageBac.

All students and staff are offered technical support via the Network Manager and Windermere School has ensured all academic staff and students have had training on how to teach and learn remotely and in a blended fashion

Additionally (e.g. for BTEC classes in the Sixth Form) students are encouraged to:

- Make use of e-portfolio work/submission on Microsoft Teams, by making available electronic copies of assignment briefs, class resources and assessment records
- Store e-portfolio work/submissions on a secure, password protected and private network.

The school reserves the right to vary the range of methods used to provide remote learning tasks, feedback and interaction, based on the particular circumstances of any closure and based on our experience.

Assessment

Providing timely and helpful feedback is a cornerstone of good teaching and learning, and whilst this may be more challenging with remote learning, teachers will endeavour to provide regular feedback to students on pieces of work that they are required to submit. Under normal circumstances, not all pieces of work are formally assessed by teachers and this would continue to be the case should the school employ remote learning. (See the Windermere School policy on Measuring Pupil Performance).

Given the nature of the tasks, the type of feedback teachers can provide may not have the same format as marking an exercise book. Teachers are encouraged to ensure, when they set assessed work, that it is designed in such a way that meaningful feedback may be provided.

Possible methods to feedback specific targets may include:

- Providing whole class feedback using Feed Forward Sheets rather than feedback on individual pieces of work –this is an effective way of providing feedback, supported by findings from educational research.
- Using the “Comments” function on online documents.
- Feedback via the Show my Homework, ManageBac or Forms comments function.
- Sending a direct ‘chat’ via Teams to students.
- Asking students to complete self-evaluation forms.

Expectations of students

Assuming that a student is healthy and well enough to work, students will be expected to participate as fully as possible in the remote learning process, attending relevant live sessions, completing independent work, and submitting assessed tasks promptly and to the best of their ability. Students will also be expected to read and respond to communication from the school (e.g. an email from a tutor) on a regular basis.

Students should ensure that, in addition to completing the tasks promptly, they should complete any administrative tasks that allow the school to monitor their progress. If students or parents have any questions about the nature of specific tasks set, these should be directed towards the relevant subject area. If there are questions about a student’s overall workload (e.g. a student feels they are overwhelmed or falling behind), these should be directed to the student’s tutor.

Teachers should ensure they are able to scan or upload photos of important resources in case students do not have access to them at home. Online textbooks are helpful in this regard and many subjects are now moving over to these.

The school expects that parents have internet access at home to access remote learning resources, but teachers will make no presumption of the student’s ability to print at home.

Expectations of teachers

The setting and assessment of remote learning tasks will take place in accordance with school and subject area policies. Under normal circumstances, subject areas take different approaches to the setting and assessment of students’ work – for example, the frequency of substantive task set, and the regularity of written assessment provided – and subject area policies will be applied in the event of remote learning.

In order that we are providing a consistent approach, heads of faculty are responsible for overseeing the nature and frequency of tasks set and assessed within their subject areas. All teachers should pay due care to the nature of tasks set, so that students have a range of activities to complete at home and are not exclusively working on a screen. Teachers are responsible for providing constructive feedback to their students in a timely manner.

In the event that a teacher is unwell during a period of remote learning, it becomes the responsibility of the line manager to ensure work is set to her/his classes.

Unless there are extenuating circumstances, teachers will be expected to be contactable remotely by colleagues, students and parents. Teachers also should ensure their communication with students does not encourage unhelpful work habits.

Communication must always occur via official school channels, and not through personal accounts or other websites. Permitted methods are:

- Email using school email addresses only
- Microsoft Teams
- Show my Homework
- ManageBac.

Support for pupils with additional needs, e.g. AGT, SEND and EAL

Teachers should ensure that work is differentiated as required for all students when setting online tasks, e.g. using the Windermere Chilli System (see Curriculum Policy). Profiles are available for SEND pupils and advice can be sought from the Head of Learning Support and the Head of EAL. In addition, staff in SEND and EAL will maintain contact with students on their lists requiring regular support and feed back to class teachers if required.

Pastoral care during a school closure

In event of a school closure, the primary responsibility for the pastoral care of a student rests with their parents / carers. However, tutors will maintain their twice daily tutor sessions to monitor both academic progress and their general wellbeing. Tutors and class teachers will be expected to pass on feedback via the Praise and Concern Spreadsheet, and tutors will maintain regular (once a fortnight minimum) contact with their tutees families.

Safeguarding during a school closure

In the event of a school closure, pupils, parents, carers and teachers are reminded that the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy still applies to all interactions between students and teachers. In that policy, there are specifically prohibited behaviours and reporting obligations to which teachers must adhere, whether they are at home, in the community or at school.

Further Details

Additional information can be found by consulting the following policies on the Windermere School website: <https://www.windermereschool.co.uk/school-policies/>

- The Curriculum Policy
- The Measuring Pupil Performance Policy
- The EAL and SEND policies
- The Safeguarding and Online Safeguarding Policies

The website also has all of our various Covid agreements and risk assessments.

This policy will be reviewed every 12 months by the Examinations Officer, BTEC Quality Nominee and Deputy Head (Academic).

Compiled	Version 20	November 2020	C Foster and E Vermeulen
Approved	Version 20.1	November 2020	I A Lavender
Reviewed	Version 21.1	September 2021	E Vermeulen